

Sentence starters

Sentence starters are a powerful tool to kick-start paragraphs, add rhetorical flair, or build cohesion in composition writing. These open-ended starters can help you express ideas more naturally and meaningfully.

Here's a curated list of **100 open-ended sentence starters**, grouped by function, with **advice on usage** and a **sample sentence** for each.

◆ Stating a General Truth or Observation

It is often said that ...

👉 Use to introduce widely held beliefs or conventional wisdom.

💬 It is often said that money can't buy happiness, but financial security surely plays a part.

The fact remains that ...

👉 Use to stress a point despite counterarguments.

💬 The fact remains that climate change continues to affect the poorest the most.

We live in a world where ...

👉 Use to present a commentary on modern society.

💬 We live in a world where digital presence often matters more than real-life interactions.

◆ Reflecting or Offering Personal Insight

I can't help but wonder ...

👉 Great for transitions into personal reflections or questions.

💬 I can't help but wonder whether we truly value education or just its outcomes.

To me, it seems that ...

👉 Softens an opinion and makes it sound more personal than absolute.

💬 To me, it seems that young people are under more pressure than ever before.

At the end of the day, ...

👉 Use to sum up or highlight what ultimately matters.

💬 At the end of the day, respect and empathy outweigh academic achievements.

◆ Introducing Contrast or Caution

It would be naïve to assume that ...

👉 *Signals critical thinking or realism.*

💬 *It would be naïve to assume that technology alone can solve social inequality.*

Not everyone would agree that ...

👉 *Use to anticipate opposing views or show awareness of differing opinions.*

💬 *Not everyone would agree that school grades reflect intelligence.*

As tempting as it may be, ...

👉 *Use to caution against an oversimplified action or idea.*

💬 *As tempting as it may be to ignore the news, staying informed is essential.*

◆ Stirring Emotions or Urgency

Lest we forget ...

👉 *Use to emphasize memory, history, or past sacrifices.*

💬 *Lest we forget, freedom has always come at a cost.*

If we're not careful, ...

👉 *A warning about consequences.*

💬 *If we're not careful, convenience will replace all real human interaction.*

The clock is ticking on ...

👉 *Use to express urgency.*

💬 *The clock is ticking on our chance to limit global warming.*

◆ Opening a New Perspective or Idea

What if we looked at it differently?

👉 *Invites the reader to challenge common views.*

💬 *What if we looked at failure not as a setback, but as a stepping stone?*

Another way to look at it is ...

👉 *Introduces an alternative view or angle.*

💬 *Another way to look at it is that competition drives progress.*

Imagine a world where ...

👉 *Use to open speculative or visionary ideas.*

💬 *Imagine a world where education was tailored to each student's strengths.*

◆ Making a Bold or Provocative Claim

Your best bet is ...

👉 *Use when giving strong advice or presenting the most sensible option.*

💬 *Your best bet is to stay true to your values, even when it's difficult.*

Let's face it: ...

👉 *Great for strong opinions or hard truths.*

💬 *Let's face it: most of us are addicted to our phones.*

No one wants to admit it, but ...

👉 *Draws attention to uncomfortable truths.*

💬 *No one wants to admit it, but fast fashion is harming the planet.*

◆ Referring to Society or Shared Experience

As a society, we tend to ...

👉 *Use to make a generalization about cultural or societal norms.*

💬 *As a society, we tend to reward success more than kindness.*

We often take it for granted that ...

👉 *Good for pointing out overlooked aspects of everyday life.*

💬 *We often take it for granted that clean water is a basic right, when it's a luxury in many places.*

It's high time we ...

👉 *Implies urgency or a long-overdue action.*

💬 *It's high time we rethought our approach to mental health in schools.*

◆ Creating Rhythm or Emphasis

Some call it X, others call it Y, but ...

👉 *Adds contrast and tension leading to a personal stance.*

💬 *Some call it freedom, others call it chaos, but the truth lies somewhere in between.*

First we X, then we Y — and only then can we Z.

👉 *Great for structuring a logical progression.*

💬 *First we listen, then we understand — and only then can we truly help.*

◆ Referencing the Past or Tradition

In times past, ...

👉 Use when comparing old and new practices or values.

💬 In times past, children played outside. Now, screens rule their free time.

History has shown us that ...

👉 A persuasive way to introduce lessons from the past.

💬 History has shown us that extreme ideologies can rise in times of uncertainty.

◆ Making a Thought-Provoking Point

There's something deeply unsettling about ...

👉 Use to highlight a disturbing trend or uncomfortable truth.

💬 There's something deeply unsettling about how dependent we are on likes and views.

Few people stop to consider that ...

👉 Use to invite reflection or challenge assumptions.

💬 Few people stop to consider that every cheap product has a hidden cost.

It speaks volumes that ...

👉 Good for interpreting a symbolic or revealing detail.

💬 It speaks volumes that children often know how to swipe before they can talk.

We may never fully understand why ...

👉 Use for mysterious, complex, or emotional topics.

💬 We may never fully understand why some people risk everything for a dream.

The irony is that ...

👉 Perfect for exposing contradictions or unexpected outcomes.

💬 The irony is that we invented social media to connect, yet feel lonelier than ever.

◆ Introducing a Balanced View or Nuance

While it's true that ..., we must also consider ...

👉 Great for showing both sides of an argument.


💬 While it's true that automation increases efficiency, we must also consider its impact on jobs.


It's a delicate balance between ... and ...

👉 Use to show tension between two valid perspectives.

💬 It's a delicate balance between protecting freedom of speech and preventing hate speech.


As with most things in life, ...


 *Use to add a realistic, nuanced take.*

 *As with most things in life, too much of a good thing can turn harmful.*


◆ Asking Big Questions


What does it really mean to ...?

 *Use to dive deeper into abstract concepts.*

 *What does it really mean to be successful in today's world?*


Have we ever stopped to ask ...?

 *Promotes introspection or overlooked questions.*

 *Have we ever stopped to ask who benefits from the choices we make?*


Is it possible that ...?


 *Use to introduce alternative perspectives.*

 *Is it possible that failure teaches us more than success ever could?*


◆ Expressing Values or Beliefs


Some things are worth fighting for, such as ...

 *Good for ethical or emotional appeal.*


 *Some things are worth fighting for, such as dignity, fairness, and human rights.*


One thing I strongly believe is that ...

 *Use to assert a clear personal stance.*

 *One thing I strongly believe is that education should never be a privilege.*


In my view, no progress is possible without ...


 *Use when presenting conditions for change.*

 *In my view, no progress is possible without honest dialogue.*

◆ Expressing Consequences or Conditions

Without ..., we risk ...

 *Use for cause-and-effect statements.*

 *Without environmental action, we risk losing entire ecosystems.*

If history is anything to go by, ...

👉 Use to draw predictions based on past patterns.

💬 If history is anything to go by, overconfidence often leads to downfall.

Unless we change our ways, ...

👉 Use to deliver a strong warning or call to action.

💬 Unless we change our ways, future generations will pay the price.

◆ Encouraging Empathy or Understanding

Put yourself in the shoes of someone who ...

👉 Use to foster empathy or perspective-taking.

💬 Put yourself in the shoes of someone who had to flee their home overnight.

It's easy to judge, but harder to ...

👉 Highlights complexity and compassion.

💬 It's easy to judge, but harder to understand what leads to bad decisions.

Behind every ... is a story we rarely hear.

👉 Use to humanize an issue.

💬 Behind every homeless person is a story we rarely hear.

◆ Opening an Example or Case

Take, for instance, the case of ...

👉 Use to provide a real-world example or case study.

💬 Take, for instance, the case of Greta Thunberg, whose activism inspired millions.

Consider the example of ...

👉 Use to support a claim or idea with evidence.

💬 Consider the example of Finland's education system, known for its equality.

One striking illustration of this is ...

👉 Adds rhetorical impact when offering proof.

💬 One striking illustration of this is how even small acts of kindness go viral.

◆ Adding Depth or Style

The more we look, the more we realise ...

👉 *Use to introduce growing insight or complexity.*

💬 *The more we look, the more we realise that happiness isn't about things.*

Call it what you will, but ...

👉 *Adds personality and voice, while affirming an opinion.*

💬 *Call it what you will, but scrolling for hours isn't a hobby.*

◆ For Emphasis or Strong Statements

Make no mistake: ...

👉 *Use for a bold or dramatic emphasis.*

💬 *Make no mistake: ignoring mental health has long-term consequences.*

One cannot deny that ...

👉 *Use to introduce an undeniable truth or fact.*

💬 *One cannot deny that technology has changed the way we think and interact.*

The truth is, ...

👉 *Use to transition into a personal or revealing statement.*

💬 *The truth is, many teenagers feel pressure to be perfect every day.*

It's not just about ... — it's also about ...

👉 *Great for adding depth to a simplified idea.*

💬 *It's not just about winning — it's also about learning how to lose.*

Let that sink in: ...

👉 *Adds drama and pause before or after an impactful idea.*

💬 *Every second, 6,000 tweets are sent. Let that sink in.*

◆ For Social Commentary

We've reached a point where ...

👉 *Use to show societal tipping points.*


💬 *We've reached a point where scrolling through news feels more like surviving a storm.*


In a perfect world, ...

👉 *Use to introduce ideals or utopias — often followed by reality.*


💬 *In a perfect world, no child would go to bed hungry.*


Far too often, we ...

 Use to point out recurring mistakes or patterns.


 *Far too often, we value productivity more than well-being.*


In the age of ...

 Use to frame the topic in a modern, contextual way.

 *In the age of constant connectivity, solitude feels rare and precious.*

We've become so used to ... that we barely notice ...


 Highlights normalization of strange or troubling habits.

 *We've become so used to background noise that we barely notice silence.*


◆ For Cause and Effect or Logical Progression


This begs the question: ...

 Use to pose a natural follow-up question or reflection.


 *We have more choices than ever. This begs the question: are we any happier?*


And yet, despite all this, ...

 Adds contrast after a list of facts or observations.


 *And yet, despite all this, inequality persists.*

That's precisely why ...

 Use to explain the logic behind a claim.


 *Social media can be overwhelming. That's precisely why digital detox is trending.*


It follows, then, that ...

 Great for academic or formal writing.

 *If trust builds community, it follows, then, that distrust tears it apart.*


What happens next depends on ...


 Use to point out the power of choices or turning points.

 *What happens next depends on whether we act — or wait too long.*


◆ For Engaging the Reader


Let's pause for a moment and consider ...

 Invites the reader to reflect deeply.


 *Let's pause for a moment and consider what it means to be truly free.*


You'd think that ... but ...

 *Great for surprising twists in reasoning.*


 *You'd think that more followers mean more friends, but the opposite may be true.*


Ask yourself this: ...

 *Use to provoke introspection.*


 *Ask yourself this: when was the last time you went a whole day without your phone?*


It's worth asking whether ...

 *Use to introduce a key question subtly.*

 *It's worth asking whether grades measure intelligence or just memory.*


No matter how you look at it, ...


 *Use to emphasize a consistent truth.*

 *No matter how you look at it, our planet cannot support endless growth.*


◆ For Perspective and Tone Shifts


On a more positive note, ...

 *Use to shift tone from heavy to hopeful.*


 *On a more positive note, young people are more aware and active than ever before.*


All things considered, ...

 *Use to weigh pros and cons before a conclusion.*


 *All things considered, the benefits of remote work outweigh the drawbacks.*


Seen from another angle, ...

 *Invites the reader to explore alternative interpretations.*


 *Seen from another angle, failure is simply progress in disguise.*


That may be true, but it's only half the story.

 *Use to challenge partial truths or oversimplifications.*

 *That may be true, but it's only half the story. Many people work hard and still struggle.*

Let's not forget the bigger picture: ...

 *Use to zoom out and connect the topic to larger issues.*

 *Let's not forget the bigger picture: our daily choices shape the future.*

◆ For Raising Awareness or Responsibility

The responsibility lies with ...

👉 *Use to assign or share responsibility thoughtfully.*

💬 *The responsibility lies with all of us to protect future generations.*

It's up to us to ...

👉 *Encourages agency and initiative.*

💬 *It's up to us to turn awareness into action.*

We cannot afford to ignore ...

👉 *Strong way to introduce urgency or importance.*

💬 *We cannot afford to ignore the mental health crisis among teens.*

Change begins with ...

👉 *Ideal for concluding or inspiring action.*

💬 *Change begins with honest conversations, even when they're uncomfortable.*

It all starts with a simple question: ...

👉 *Hooks the reader with curiosity and direction.*

💬 *It all starts with a simple question: what kind of future do we want to build?*

◆ For Questioning Assumptions or Norms

Just because everyone does it doesn't mean ...

👉 *Challenges conformity or popular habits.*

💬 *Just because everyone does it doesn't mean it's the right thing to do.*

Who decided that ...?

👉 *Questions authority, tradition, or norms.*

💬 *Who decided that success is measured by grades or salaries?*

We've been taught to believe that ...

👉 *Good for examining cultural or educational assumptions.*

💬 *We've been taught to believe that being busy means being important.*

We rarely stop to question ...

👉 *Use to highlight blind spots in thinking.*

💬 *We rarely stop to question the systems we take for granted.*

What if everything we thought we knew about ... was wrong?

👉 *Provocative and engaging for essays with a twist.*

💬 *What if everything we thought we knew about intelligence was wrong?*

◆ For Framing Ethical or Global Concerns

The real test of our values is ...

👉 *Use to connect beliefs to actions or consequences.*

💬 *The real test of our values is how we treat those with no power.*

The world is watching how we ...

👉 *Great for global issues, human rights, or environmental debates.*

💬 *The world is watching how we respond to the climate emergency.*

At what cost are we ...?

👉 *Use to raise awareness of trade-offs or ethical dilemmas.*

💬 *At what cost are we chasing comfort, if it destroys the planet?*

Justice isn't justice unless ...

👉 *A bold way to define fairness or equity.*

💬 *Justice isn't justice unless it applies to everyone equally.*

Our silence speaks volumes when ...

👉 *Use to discuss inaction, complicity, or bystander effect.*

💬 *Our silence speaks volumes when we witness bullying and say nothing.*

◆ For Introducing Contradictions or Surprises

It may sound strange, but ...

👉 *Good for breaking expectations or sharing less obvious truths.*

💬 *It may sound strange, but failure has taught me more than any success.*

The more connected we are, the more ...

👉 *Use to highlight modern paradoxes.*

💬 *The more connected we are, the more disconnected we sometimes feel.*

We praise ..., but often ignore ...

👉 *Use to reveal cultural contradictions.*

💬 *We praise independence, but often ignore loneliness.*

We claim to value ..., yet ...

👉 *Useful for pointing out hypocrisy or gaps between words and actions.*

💬 *We claim to value creativity, yet punish mistakes in school.*

The real problem isn't ... — it's ...

👉 *Shifts focus and challenges surface-level thinking.*

💬 *The real problem isn't technology — it's how we choose to use it.*

◆ For Speculation or Visionary Thinking

If we dared to dream big, we might ...

👉 *Inspires ambition or visionary thought.*

💬 *If we dared to dream big, we might design cities that heal rather than harm.*

Imagine if future generations looked back and asked ...

👉 *Creates a future-facing ethical challenge.*

💬 *Imagine if future generations looked back and asked why we didn't do more.*

In the not-so-distant future, ...

👉 *Use to introduce realistic predictions or concerns.*

💬 *In the not-so-distant future, artificial intelligence could outpace human decision-making.*

If we continue down this path, ...

👉 *Forecasts consequences — often as a warning.*

💬 *If we continue down this path, natural disasters will become the new normal.*

The choice is ours: ... or ...

👉 *Great for conclusions and framing alternatives.*

💬 *The choice is ours: protect our planet or watch it slip away.*

100 Open-Ended Sentence Starters for Powerful Composition Writing

◆ GENERAL TRUTHS & OBSERVATIONS

1. It is often said that ...
2. The fact remains that ...
3. We live in a world where ...
4. No matter how you look at it, ...
5. In the not-so-distant future, ...

◆ PERSONAL REFLECTION & INSIGHT

6. I can't help but wonder ...
7. To me, it seems that ...
8. At the end of the day, ...
9. One thing I strongly believe is that ...
10. Just because everyone does it doesn't mean ...

◆ CONTRAST, DOUBT & NUANCE

11. It would be naïve to assume that ...
12. Not everyone would agree that ...
13. As tempting as it may be, ...
14. While it's true that ..., we must also consider ...
15. Seen from another angle, ...

◆ URGENCY & CAUTION

16. Lest we forget ...
17. If we're not careful, ...
18. The clock is ticking on ...
19. We cannot afford to ignore ...
20. Unless we change our ways, ...

◆ ALTERNATIVE VIEWS & SPECULATION

21. What if we looked at it differently?
22. Another way to look at it is ...
23. Imagine a world where ...
24. If we dared to dream big, we might ...
25. What if everything we thought we knew about ... was wrong?

◆ STRONG CLAIMS & BOLD OPINIONS

26. Your best bet is ...
27. Let's face it: ...
28. Make no mistake: ...
29. The truth is, ...
30. The real problem isn't ... — it's ...

◆ SOCIETY & VALUES

31. As a society, we tend to ...
32. We often take it for granted that ...
33. We've become so used to ... that we barely notice ...
34. The world is watching how we ...
35. The real test of our values is ...

◆ STIRRING THOUGHTS & EMOTIONS

- 36. There's something deeply unsettling about ...
- 37. Few people stop to consider that ...
- 38. It speaks volumes that ...
- 39. Far too often, we ...
- 40. Our silence speaks volumes when ...

◆ TWO SIDES & COMPLEXITY

- 41. It's a delicate balance between ... and ...
- 42. As with most things in life, ...
- 43. We praise ..., but often ignore ...
- 44. We claim to value ..., yet ...
- 45. That may be true, but it's only half the story.

◆ BIG QUESTIONS

- 46. What does it really mean to ...?
- 47. Have we ever stopped to ask ...?
- 48. Is it possible that ...?
- 49. Ask yourself this: ...
- 50. It all starts with a simple question: ...

◆ CONSEQUENCES & CONDITIONS

- 51. Without ..., we risk ...
- 52. If history is anything to go by, ...
- 53. It follows, then, that ...
- 54. What happens next depends on ...
- 55. If we continue down this path, ...

◆ EXPRESSING EMPATHY

- 56. Put yourself in the shoes of someone who ...
- 57. It's easy to judge, but harder to ...
- 58. Behind every ... is a story we rarely hear.
- 59. The choice is ours: ... or ...
- 60. Who decided that ...?

◆ GIVING EXAMPLES

- 61. Take, for instance, the case of ...
- 62. Consider the example of ...
- 63. One striking illustration of this is ...
- 64. In times past, ...
- 65. History has shown us that ...

◆ ADDING STYLE OR EMPHASIS

- 66. First we ..., then we ..., and only then can we ...
- 67. Some call it X, others call it Y, but ...
- 68. Call it what you will, but ...
- 69. Let that sink in: ...
- 70. Change begins with ...

◆ SOCIAL COMMENTARY

- 71. We've reached a point where ...
- 72. In a perfect world, ...
- 73. In the age of ...
- 74. We rarely stop to question ...
- 75. We've been taught to believe that ...

◆ LOGIC & STRUCTURE

- 76. This begs the question: ...
- 77. And yet, despite all this, ...
- 78. That's precisely why ...
- 79. Let's not forget the bigger picture: ...
- 80. All things considered, ...

◆ INVOLVING THE READER

- 81. Let's pause for a moment and consider ...
- 82. You'd think that ..., but ...
- 83. It's worth asking whether ...
- 84. Imagine if future generations looked back and asked ...
- 85. Let's not forget ...

◆ ETHICS, JUSTICE & GLOBAL ISSUES

- 86. Justice isn't justice unless ...
- 87. At what cost are we ...?
- 88. The more connected we are, the more ...
- 89. In my view, no progress is possible without ...
- 90. It's up to us to ...

◆ CONCLUSION & CLOSURE

- 91. The responsibility lies with ...
- 92. On a more positive note, ...
- 93. All things considered, ...
- 94. If we dared to dream big, we might ...
- 95. What happens next depends on ...

◆ RHETORICAL & PERSUASIVE

- 96. One cannot deny that ...
- 97. It may sound strange, but ...
- 98. We've been taught to believe that ...
- 99. Let's face it: ...
- 100. The more we look, the more we realise ...

Source: **Chatty Gepetto**